

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 497

By Niceley

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of William H. (Dusty)
Roden, Jr. of Jefferson City.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of William H. (Dusty) Roden Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Roden was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a former commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs, William Roden, Jr. was appointed to the post in 1979 by Governor Lamar Alexander and continued his service until 1988, rendering eight years of meritorious service to the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, born in Chattanooga on October 1, 1922, William Roden, Jr. was the son of William Herbert Roden, Sr. and Flora Pearl White Roden; he graduated from Jackson County High School in Scottsboro, Alabama in 1940; and

WHEREAS, a 1947 graduate of Carson-Newman College, Mr. Roden earned a Master of Arts degree from George Peabody College in 1948 and obtained his Doctorate in Physical Education from Indiana University in 1956. He would pursue post-doctoral studies at the University of Michigan between 1957 and 1962; and

WHEREAS, a member of this Nation's "Greatest Generation", William Roden Jr. proudly answered the call to duty during World War II and served in the United States Army Air Corps as a fighter pilot from 1942 to 1945. He would continue his military service in the U.S. Air Force Reserve from 1945 to 1972, retiring at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Roden's career in education and public administration began with teaching and coaching positions at Jefferson City and Dickson County High School from 1946 to

1948, and subsequent such positions at Missouri Baptist College and Henderson State College from 1948 until 1954; and

WHEREAS, he returned to Tennessee to join the faculty of Carson Newman College in 1954 as head basketball coach and assistant football coach until being named professor of health and education and dean of students in 1957, which he would hold until 1968; and

WHEREAS, from 1968 until 1979, Mr. Roden was employed as the dean of student services and professor of health and physical education at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville; and

WHEREAS, called to serve the people of Tennessee, William Roden Jr. was named the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs by newly-elected Governor Lamar Alexander in 1979, a post he would hold until his retirement in 1987; and

WHEREAS, among his many accomplishments as the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Roden is especially remembered for being very persistent and passionate in his pursuit of benefit programs for Tennessee's veterans; and

WHEREAS, a faithful member of the Baptist Church, William Roden Jr. served in leadership roles in several Baptist churches and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Roden also rendered sterling service to a number of civic and charitable organizations, including Little League baseball, Boy Scouts of America, American Legion Boy's State (Tennessee), and American Legion Boy's Nation, to name but a few; and

WHEREAS, a devoted father, Mr. Roden is survived by his three sons and their families: Dr. William C. Roden and his wife, JoAnn Wilson Roden, and their two children, William Christopher Roden and Kathryn Frances Roden; John R. (Bob) Roden and his wife, Charlene Chapman Roden, and their children, Sean Christopher Roden and his wife, Rachel Sjolander Roden, David Scott Roden, James Rankin Parsons, Leigh Ann Parsons, and great grandchild, Travis Dalton Parsons; and Gary L. Roden; and

WHEREAS, a gracious gentleman who lived a life of purpose and embodied the ideal of service to his country, Mr. Roden leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this truly exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Mr. William H. (Dusty) Roden, Jr., reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his extraordinary contributions to the people of Tennessee, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Roden.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.